

Red Weekly

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The
**Red
Mole**

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP (BRITISH SECTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL)

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PICKETS GO FOR TRIAL



Trade unionists march through Shrewsbury after the committal proceedings last Friday.

CAR BOSSES TURN ON HEAT

The Chrysler bosses have stepped up their offensive against the Ryton workers. Early on Monday morning, two convoys of lorries broke their way through picket lines outside the Stoke plant in Coventry, which is being picketed by the Ryton strikers.

The drivers hired by Chrysler were thugs who threw bottles, bricks and iron bars at pickets as they sped towards the gates at 40 mph.

Chrysler is riding on a boom in the world car market. This has resulted in a massive speed-up. In recent months Ryton has increased its output from 3,000 to 3,500 cars a week.

The threats to suspend investment in Britain made by the US owned company are designed solely to put pressure on the workers. Chrysler's plants abroad are not tooled up for the successful Avenger model to be transferred from Britain. Comparing these threats to those made by Ford two years ago, the *Sunday Times* commented: 'Chrysler would like a

clear run (no more strikes) much as Ford has had since that big strike.'

The response of the workers at Stoke has been further confused by the line from shop stewards (reinforced by the *Morning Star*) about 'Chicago style tactics.' But the attacks on pickets were to be expected. It is not the nationality of the firm but the development of the class struggle in Britain itself which leads the bosses increasingly to use these kinds of tactics.

The reaction of the Stoke stewards to Monday morning's events was to recommend strike action. But the AUEW bureaucracy quickly intervened and the management gave them assurances that no more materials would be moved for another week and that they had no part in planning the violence used by the drivers they contracted. On the same day, the Lord Mayor of Coventry (a Labour Councillor) fixed up a meeting between union officials and management to discuss the Ryton

dispute. These assurances and a hint of the meeting were dropped to Stoke stewards before the mass meeting which was to endorse their recommendation for a strike. The recommendation was withdrawn; Stoke failed to strike and the Linwood plant in Scotland followed suit.

These manoeuvres created disunity precisely at the moment when the main issue facing the workers became the need to unite to defend the pickets.

Chrysler is a fight for the whole working class. A report published recently by the CBI explained the need for bosses to make a systematic attack on 'restrictive practices' throughout British industry as a whole. Speed-up will confront all workers. The defence of picket lines, as *Red Weekly* has been urging throughout the campaign to defend the Shrewsbury 24, is an urgent task for all workers. The Ryton workers must be given support by all.

Last week Shrewsbury magistrates decided there was a case against the 24 building workers appearing before them on charges arising out of last year's building strike. They decided to send these militants to the Crown Court for trial.

In cases involving serious charges, such as those against the Shrewsbury 24, the job of the magistrates' court is simply to decide if sufficient evidence exists to bother with a full-scale trial. This then takes place in the Crown Court.

The decision of the Shrewsbury magistrates is a clear-cut indicator that the state is not simply bluffing; it is out to get the 24. It wants their case to serve as an example to the whole labour movement, and to provide precedents for future attacks. We should make it into a precedent of our unity and power to resist ruling class attack and defend our ability to organise.

In a blatant attempt to hamper the unity of the defendants and the growing defence campaign, there will be two trials in two different areas. The main trial of all 24 will take place in Shrewsbury, probably in the autumn. But seven of the men also face separate charges at the Crown Court in Mold, a small North Wales town some ten miles east of Chester.

The trial of these seven opens next Tuesday, 26 June. It is essential that as large a demonstration as possible takes place outside the Mold courthouse on that day to support the defendants. We must make clear to the state authorities that their splitting manoeuvre has not worked, and that our determination to see this struggle through until final victory has grown even greater.

The Shrewsbury 24 defence committee has called for an all-out

mobilisation on that day. The recent decisions by important sections of the labour movement to take up this question should make this by far the largest mobilisation so far. But it is really just beginning.

The International Marxist Group and the Socialist Labour League have agreed to jointly sponsor a public meeting in London in defence of the Shrewsbury 24. This will take place on Friday, 6 July, at 7.30 p.m. in Acton Town Hall. Dave Jackson from the Shrewsbury Defence Committee has already agreed to speak at the meeting. Invitations have also been sent to both the Communist Party and the Labour Party to participate.

Regrettably, the International Socialists have refused to sponsor the meeting. A letter from them states that 'this is not within the terms of reference of the joint statement [IS-SLL-IMG statement in defence of basic rights] and that it will add nothing to the effect of each individual organisation's efforts in support of the Shrewsbury building workers'.

See p. 3 for latest information on developments in the Shrewsbury 24 defence campaign.

With the help of our readers and supporters, *Red Weekly* is now firmly established. But we do not intend to stop here. Over the next few months we hope further to expand the scope and coverage of the paper.

But this can only be done with your continued support and assistance. That is why

we have launched a regular Fighting Fund to raise £300 a month. With only just over a week left of this month we still need almost £200. We urge every reader to consider sending us a donation now. Or even better, why not make it a regular banker's order? Cheques/PDs/banker's orders to: *Red Weekly*, 182 Pentonville Road, N.1.

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NUT: BUREAUCRACY IN RANK & FILE

Last weekend saw another step backwards for the organisation of left teachers in the NUT, Rank & File, at its National Committee meeting in Leicester.

The most important immediate issue facing Rank & File is the defence of three of its own militants. During the struggle over the teachers' London allowance, a mass meeting was held at the Central Hall, Westminster. The attitude of the NUT Executive provoked opposition from the floor, and three teachers from Wandsworth are now facing victimisation by the Executive.

To defend these teachers, it is necessary for Rank & File to go on the offensive against the bureaucracy, not just in defence of members' rights, but against the Government-TUC talks which are motivating the trade union bureaucracy's moves against the rank and file at the present time. On 14 June, a London Rank & File meeting called for a full discussion of the case of the Wandsworth Three at the NC meeting. But a mere 30 minutes was devoted to the issue.

BUREAUCRATIC APPROACH

This type of bureaucratic mismanagement could easily be dismissed as a mere aberration, motivated by a false belief that the best way to defend Rank & File is to bury one's head in the sand. But as the NC moved on to discuss policy motions for the next NUT Conference, this bureaucratic approach became the norm.

Only two motions had been circulated to the membership, so the group which had submitted them (East London) asked that no decisions be taken until Rank & File members had had a further opportunity to submit and discuss motions. But although this was supported by a motion from Lambeth, delegates were forced to vote on 11 additional motions which were presented to them at the NC. Then, without any previous consultation with the membership, the NC prioritised six of the motions! Yet Rank & File is at present attempting to reject the right of the NUT Executive to present motions to Conference without prior circulation to the membership!

Other events at the NC fell into the same pattern. For instance, the IMG comrades have for some time been pressing Rank & File to take up the question of Ireland in a serious way. To call a special conference 75 signatures are needed under the newly adopted constitution. Lambeth Rank & File had collected 75 signatures at the Annual Conference and presented them to the EC some time ago. The EC argued that at the time there was no constitution, so the 75 signatures must be collected again. However, the real reason for these delaying tactics seems to be an anxiety, which the IS Chairperson expressed, that to take up the issue of Ireland within the union would be detrimental to Rank & File. Rather than put this cowardly position at a conference, she chose to employ administrative means to stop

the conference coming about.

FACADE

The line of the IS leadership, as publicly stated in their paper, is to build 'democratic rank and file union organisations.' But the behaviour of IS in Rank & File would tend to suggest that this is just a facade behind which the IS stifle political criticism in an effort to build their own organisation. Significantly enough, this latest NC saw the IS drop (without explanation) their previous line of support for the participation of teachers with the capitalist state in running the schools. This line has been discredited by the criticisms of the IMG, the chief political opponent of the IS in Rank & File. The IS are now advocating staff associations in the schools instead. This is a big step forward. But the experience does not seem to have whetted the appetite of the IS comrades for more debate and democracy in Rank & File.

Members of Rank & File cannot ignore these developments. In taking up the crucial fight for the Wandsworth Three, a fight which puts to the test the fighting capacity of Rank & File, the members must also call the leadership of Rank & File to order. For, as Rank & File has previously argued, and as *Socialist Worker* has argued, how can an organisation which doesn't allow full discussion and participation by the membership effectively fight the ruling class?

CURRENT ACCOUNT

Desperate measures

Events in the United States are showing how in a situation of economic crisis capitalists are as fearful of a boom as they are of a slump. Increasing signs that the 6-month old American boom is ending are greeted in the capitalist press with relief.

This year production in real terms is rising at a rate of over 8 percent. But, with the abandonment of price controls in late 1972, inflation has leapt up at 10 percent a year for retail prices, is approaching 20 percent for wholesale prices (affected by devaluation and a rash of profiteering), and, worst of all, is running at over 40 percent for farm prices. Money wages meanwhile have crept up at only 5 percent. If this continued it would lead rapidly to a further, even bigger, run on the dollar, and a sharp increase in labour militancy to fight falling real wages. Nixon's extreme political weakness resulting from the Watergate affair makes such prospects more frightening than ever.

But at the same time Watergate has robbed Nixon of the congressional strength required to renew a comprehensive programme for the control of inflation. The result is the two stop-gap measures announced in Nixon's speech last week: a 60-day price freeze (excluding farm prices, but including retail food prices) and a call for powers to ban the export of grains and soybeans.

Many firms have already raised their prices in expectation of the freeze; and in other ways it will be hard to enforce and almost impossible to prolong beyond the allotted two months. It will be amazing if Watergate has evaporated enough by then for Nixon to introduce successfully the much more rigid price and wage controls (Phase 4) which he threatened for August.

The potential ban on exports of grains and soybeans could be more significant. These products enter into the production of basic foodstuffs — grains directly, and soybeans indirectly as one of the two major sources of protein animal feedstuffs (the other is fishmeal). The prices of these basic foods have been pushed up at a phenomenal rate in the last year, not only by the general sources of world inflation, but also by certain specific developments: supply has been curtailed both through bad harvests and through the virtual ending of the supply of fishmeal from Peru, the world's largest producer, because of the disappearance of the anchovy shoals off the Peruvian coast. At the same time world demand for grains has been raised by exceptional purchases in the world market by the USSR (10 million tons) and China (2.5 million tons), in response to agricultural difficulties, and by India and other countries in response to famine.

The United States is one of the major suppliers of both grains and soybeans, so a restriction on exports, by reducing effective demand for American producers, may do something to control food prices in the United States. But it will be at the cost of giving a sharp turn to the inflationary screw elsewhere, especially in Europe and Japan. This protectionist move, therefore, makes it more unlikely than ever that any progress can be made at the crucial forthcoming negotiations between the U.S., Europe and Japan on either tariff reductions or the world monetary crisis. It also increases the likelihood that the capitalist nations will react to their menacing economic problems more and more through protectionist and competitive measures, which will lead towards world slump.

There are those who say that this situation will solve itself, since it results from a series of unfortunate accidents. Of course neither bad weather in the American mid-west and in the Russian steppes, nor the sunspots which changed the south Pacific current and dispersed the anchovies, nor even Watergate, are the inevitable outcome of the laws of motion of the capitalist mode of production. But it is a well-established rule in economics, as in medicine, that the healthy survive accidents, while the sick bodies even small accidents are mortal.

Michael Price

COVENTRY 7 SENT FOR TRIAL



Gery Lawless addresses meeting after the court appearance.

The Coventry seven, charged with conspiring to cause arson, explosions and criminal damage, made their tenth appearance at the magistrates court in Coventry last Friday, 15 June. All seven were committed for trial in Birmingham at an unspecified date.

Additional charges have also been made against individuals among the seven: Anthony Lynch is charged with possession of various items, and Father Fell and Frank Stagg with organising a unit of the IRA in Coventry. One of the seven, Patrick Burke, who was only arrested on

30 May and had been out on bail, has now been remanded in custody. The list of police witnesses includes Special Branch officers from Glasgow and Birmingham, army experts and soldiers from Ireland, and photographers.

A large crowd demonstrated outside the court, and after the men had been taken away to Winston Green Prison in Birmingham there was a march to the city centre where a meeting was held. The main speaker here was Gery Lawless, who stressed the political nature of the trial and the need to continue and step up the

defence work in order to defeat the British government's plans. The trial is not expected to take place before September, and in this period the Defence Committee will be continuing its activity to win the widest possible support, particularly from the labour movement, for the seven when they finally come up for trial.

For further details contact: Coventry Prisoners Defence Committee, c/o 27 Paynes Lane, Hillfields, Coventry (0203-58991).

30-year hitch

The debate on the new Employment and Training Bill has forced the Government to dust off the Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts of 1944 and 1958 and reread the sections on the Employers Quota Obligation System.

Britain has one of the worst unemployment records for disabled people in Europe. By law, 3 per cent of the workforce should come from among the severely disabled wherever 20 or more people are employed. These regulations were introduced as the Second World War neared its end, so that the fullest use could be made of the disabled servicemen and factory workers on the production line. But the legislation has since

become useless — 9,000 firms with more than 20 workers failed to meet their statutory obligations in this respect last year.

'BACKHANDERS'

At a press conference on 22 May the Secretary of Employment, Maurice Macmillan, introduced a discussion document suggesting that maybe the quota system was outdated. A change was needed, he said; 'the Government intends to make the disabled realise that they need not depend on charity, but are valued for the contribution they can make as workers.' The Tories are believed to be disturbed by the amount of Social Security paid out to the disabled, and one idea is to give 'backhanders' to the employers of severely disabled people, thus cutting down the benefits bill and making some surplus value out of them as well.

But the following day the Under-Secretary for Employment, Mr. Dudley Smith, told the House of Commons that the whole subject was 'fraught with complexity' and so no immediate decision could be taken. He opposed a suggestion to bring the new Manpower Services Commission into the act: 'because of the close and cordial relationship which it is hoped will exist between the commission and its agencies and industry, it is desirable that it should not have the duty of enforcing the quota provisions.' Talks with the employers were being held and a consultative document would be published later this year.

In other words, the ruling class has yet to work out the cheapest way of providing for the disabled. Meanwhile, 12 per cent of the disabled workforce face the demoralising prospect of being permanently out of work.

Campaign against troops in Ireland

'If any man, soldier or civilian, is convinced that his country is wrong he should cease to support it and take the consequences.'

BRIGADIER FRANK KITSON

Reading Demo

After performing a rather obscure ritual display of military arrogance known as 'beating the retreat' in no less than seven Berkshire towns, the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment (Berkshire and Wiltshire) will be off to do a 'tour of duty' in the north of Ireland for 18 months.

On Saturday, 23 June, this two-week long military fanfare culminates in Reading. This is seen by the regimental top-brass as 'pre-serving' (shoring up?) the 'close ties' the regiment is supposed to have with the local population. In Reading they are staging a military concert in the town centre at mid-day, and 'beating the retreat' in the evening.

Less than two months ago they put on a similar show to impress the local population. At that time they 'bid farewell' to Berlin. Then it was a spectacular pageant of the high-lights of the regiment's 230-year history. It would seem that the increasing disillusionment, among soldiers and civilians alike, with the British involvement in Ireland, has forced the Duke of Edinburgh's top-brass to 'boost morale' through such public relations gimmicks, aimed at whipping up some momentary public enthusiasm for the Army.

In the Berlin pageant, much was made of the role played by the 49th regiment (one of the 4 original regiments from which the county regiment is derived) in what was innocuously referred to as 'the War in China in 1840'. In fact it is better known as the *First Opium War*. It was (as every school-boy knows) started by Britain for the great and noble purpose of protecting the British Empire's 'right' to continue peddling this dangerous drug in China.

But the campaign of which the regiment is most proud is the second Afghan War, and the battle of Maiwand in 1880. This campaign, like the first Afghan War, was started by the British government to depose the ruler of Afghanistan and replace him with a pro-British puppet.

The battle of Maiwand itself was distinguished by being one of the few cases in nineteenth century Asia of the British army suffering a decisive defeat in open battle. Contrary to popular myth the battle was not won by weight of numbers. It opened with a set-piece artillery duel in which, to their surprise, the British found themselves out-classed by the Afghan gunners from

Kabul, who had been well trained and handled their cannon in exemplary fashion' (Arnold Fletcher: *Afghanistan, Highway of Conquest*, 1965).

Then the irregular forces attached to the Afghan army (not the main army, which took almost no part in the battle) charged the British lines. The 66th Regiment (the 'ancestor' involved in this particular campaign) was not exactly in the front line. . . . No, they put two lines of colonial soldiers in front of them - the Jacobs Rifles and the Bombay Grenadiers. These were forced back onto the 66th's lines, and then the Afghan irregulars took advantage of the confusion to press home their attack. The 66th was all but wiped out, but, like Dunkirk, this crushing defeat has been turned into a great propaganda saga of a heroic last-stand.

The real significance of Maiwand at the time was to smash the myth of white supremacy in the field of open battle and show that what really counted was a combination of courage and technique. After Maiwand, things were never quite the same for the British in Afghanistan.

The whole glorious regimental history amounts in fact to nothing more than a series of sordid tales of armed force being



Statue in Reading commemorating the loss of an entire regiment at the battle of Maiwand.

used to subjugate militarily less well equipped peoples to the yoke of British capital.

So, as the Royal Regiment departs to Ireland - to take up its customary role of trying to impose British rule and policy upon another people - it only remains for us to wish them many happy returns of Maiwand!

Reading Anti-Internment League has, together with various socialist organisations, organised a picket against the military concert in Reading on June 23rd. The picket will concentrate on putting out a joint leaflet calling for the withdrawal of British troops, and self-determination for Ireland. The assembly point for this picket is Forbury Gardens (where you will find the Lion pictured above), near Reading Station, at 11.30 a.m. Paul Hunter

South-Shields anti-recruitment drive

With land such a scarce commodity, the British Armed Forces have been finding it increasingly difficult to find enough field corners in which to bury its 'heroes', failures, and other unfortunate members. Instead it's had to resort to shipping them home to the family for burial in the local cemetery. Not surprisingly, most of the funerals have been taking place in and around the council estates and other working class districts of Britain.

Most of the 'defenders of the realm' originated and lived the early part of their youth in such dowdy quarters. On leaving school, they were faced with only two alternatives: the dole (penniless and bored) or the armed forces (where, they are told, apprenticeships are two a penny and a life of happiness, fulfillment and adventure awaits them). Large numbers opted for the second of the two.

TRADES COUNCIL ACTS

South Shields Trades Union Council has recently mounted a campaign against recruitment to the armed forces. Because of the high levels of unemployment the area has become a happy hunting ground for the armed forces' intensive recruitment campaigns. For many lads the social pressure to get jobs drives them to what they see as the only alternative to the dole.

The Trades Council is organising picketing of local recruitment offices by trade unionists and it is also calling for the banning of recruitment campaigns in the towns and schools of the North East. If the authorities refuse to stop recruitment in schools, the Trades Council will attempt to enforce the decision themselves. They have rejected the idea of debating with army officers in the schools; as far as they are concerned this would merely give an aura of respectability to the anti-working class ideas and institutions they want to combat.

The Trades Council is very concerned with the Army's role in the north of Ireland. They welcomed the recent national initiative of the Anti-Internment League in calling a conference on the British Army and the British Labour Movement, because they are aware that Derry and Belfast are the testing ground for the

weapons that the ruling class may turn against the workers in this country tomorrow.

WHAT DIRECTION?

Malcolm Campbell, President of the South Shields Trades Union Council, summed up the Council's feelings when he said:

'Young people from this area are being used as cannon fodder for the armed forces. For years the North East and other areas of high unemployment have provided the bulk of rank and file recruitment. Young working class lads are being exploited before they really know what it's all about. They are being used in situations like Northern Ireland to suppress members of their own working class.

'The advertisements for the forces show a life of beer, birds, and bingo. They never mention that you will be ordered to kill - and risk being killed. We will point this out to this year's school leavers. We will point out that the weapons and tactics they will be ordered to use and develop could be used against their own family and friends, workers and trade unionists in this country. The Army Chiefs - Brigadier Michael Calvert and Brigadier Frank Kitson - are already preaching a policy of training of the armed forces to be used against strikers, students and other "trouble makers." The Tory Party pamphlet *In Defence of Peace* says that "The techniques of political terrorism must now be an integral part of every front line soldier's career."

'We will ask young potential recruits the question - "when your officers order you to fire on your own people - in what direction will you point your rifle?"'

CAMPAIGN

The campaign is aimed at school leavers, unemployed youth, and students. Participation has been invited from all trade unionists, labour movement bodies, and other interested parties. Approaches are being made to other Trades Councils, and to Youth Trades Councils. Student Unions will be urged to put a ban on all visits of Officer Training Corps representatives to their colleges.

How the campaign will develop is not yet clear, but it has already produced one noteworthy comment. On finding out about the decision of the Trades Council, South Shields Labour Party promptly disassociated itself from such unseemly activity. A spokesman for the Labour Party said that he wouldn't like to see unfair pressure being put on lads not to join the army!

By JACK GRASSBY and MICK GOSLING (South Shields TUC Anti-Recruitment Committee)

SUPPORT GROWS FOR SHREWSBURY 24

Well over a hundred trade unionists attended a meeting in London last Thursday, 14 June, called by the Joint Sites Committee to launch a committee in defence of picketing.

The meeting had been prepared by several days' intensive leafletting, and site meetings addressed by Dave Jackson of the Shrewsbury 24 Defence Committee. Jackson also spoke on Thursday night, along with Jim Kemp of the Joint Sites Committee. It was emphasised that the first task of the new committee in defence of picketing would be to mobilise in support of the Shrewsbury 24 - particularly on 26 June, when seven of them will appear at Mold Crown Court. Fifty-one pounds for the Shrewsbury Workers' Defence Fund was collected at the meeting, and it was agreed to circulate all trade union bodies in London inviting them to affiliate to the committee (cost of affiliation is £5, which should be sent to Jim Kemp, 51 The Avenue, London, N.W.6).

SERIES OF ACTIVITIES

The London meeting was only one of a whole series of activities throughout the country organised around the latest appearance of the Shrewsbury 24 in court last Friday, 15 June.

when they were committed for trial in Shrewsbury on a date yet to be specified. Three hundred people, mainly trade union delegates from all the major centres, demonstrated outside the court as the men were told that the prosecution intended to produce 250 witnesses and that the trial could last for as long as five months.

But the main efforts were not concentrated in Shrewsbury on this occasion; the Defence Committee had decided to call for a token picket only in Shrewsbury, and to concentrate on a local 'day of explanation and agitation' aimed at broadening the base of support for the campaign. In most places this meant systematic activity of a fairly low-level but very necessary kind - leafletting, open air meetings, etc. But in some places, where steps in winning broad trade union support are already more advanced, it was possible to take more ambitious action.

In South Shields, for instance, over 20 members of the local Trade Union Council took part in a picket of the local police station. Those taking part included members of the T&GWU, GMWU, ATTI, TSSA, AUEW, BTU, TASS and other unions. The significance of the



Dave Jackson at the meeting called by the London Joint Sites Committee.

picket was highlighted with the appearance of a police photographer in plain clothes, P.C. Jim Maughan, who dived away happily for half an hour before going back into the station. Senior police officers refused to see a delegation from the Trade Union Council to discuss the matter; as Durham police chief Arthur Puckering commented to the local paper: 'the police probably wanted a record of those who took part in the demonstration.' The point of the picket could hardly have been more forcibly made.

FURTHER PLANS

Apart from the mass mobilisation next Tuesday, further plans are being made by local activists

to raise the issue in the labour movement. In Colchester, for instance, where there is no real tradition of militancy, an Action Committee already exists which includes shop stewards from some of the main factories in the area - Woods, Colchester Lathes, and Nig Banda. And in Yorkshire the Sheffield & Rotherham Committee for the Defence of the Shrewsbury 24 is organising a conference on repression with major trade union speakers for 14 July in the Sheffield City Hall. This is already winning considerable support from the local labour movement and shows what can be achieved by taking initiatives independently of the trade union bureaucracy.

MARTIN METEYARD

In occasional quiet interludes between the heated sessions of Party polemic across the floor of the House of Commons, the members of the present opposition — 'left' and 'right' alike — can often be caught in poses of virtuous contentment.

It is on such occasions that they indulge themselves in pleasant daydreams of the great common purpose that unites them all — Socialism. The dream of Socialism has, since the foundation of the Party, been the cement which binds it together.

Unfortunately, each time a Labour Government has mounted the steps of power, the dream has turned into a nightmare, and the Party has started to come apart at the seams.

But never let it be said that the Labour Party has leaders who are weak of heart: once more they have their paste-pots to the ready and are busy putting the Party back into shape for the great electoral battles ahead.

The latest version of the perennial dream is *Labour's Programme for Britain*, published as a supplement to *Labour Weekly* two weeks ago. Let us listen to the dream-spinners: 'We aim to bring about a society based on co-operation instead of competition; where production is for people's needs, not for private profit; where community care is available for all; where the personal relationships are based on equality, and international relationships on mutual respect. Our basic Socialist principles are today more relevant than ever.'

Very admirable. But when buying a product as well-used as the Labour Party's Socialism, it is best to read the fine print of the contract very closely.

Social Policy

The traditional backbone of Labour Party policy has always been social policy. Partly this flows from the social-democratic criticisms of the capitalist system, which see the problem with that system not in terms of the rule of one class over another, but as a series of undesirable injustices. The building blocks of socialism, in this view, are not those steps which challenge the power of the ruling class, but those measures which give direct relief to the suffering produced by the system.

This view of capitalism is of considerable use to social-democracy, because it allows them to go to the masses at election time with an appealing programme that seems to offer some immediate, practical assistance. For this reason, social policy is one of the few areas in which the Labour Party has been eager to recall its record.

Moreover, it is quite clear that the decay of capitalist society is producing huge social problems: housing shortages, inadequate medical services, growth of slums, continuing poverty etc. All this should offer the Labour Party great opportunities to make electoral hay.

THE SCEPTICAL

Undoubtedly the social policy planks will feature prominently in the Manifesto which Labour will produce for the next election. But the programme has to deal with an audience of trade union militants and party supporters who will justifiably be more sceptical. They may well be aware that the 'free health service' was the achievement of a Labour government. But they are equally likely to recall, for example, that it was also a Labour government that began the dismantling of this social-democratic Frankenstein when it began to consume an increasing volume of state revenue.

It will not be so easy to convince these people that the Labour Party is once again the party of 'social reform'. They will do a little simple arithmetic and see that the proposals for higher pensions, better aid to the disabled, nursery education, and new council houses alone will cost an additional £2000 million a year. They will wonder about the result of adding in public transport subsidies, reduced health service charges, subsidised council rents, better rent rebates and improvement grants, and more grants for local authority expenditure. Growing scepticism will make them abandon this exercise before calculating the cost of such items as the purchase of building land and private rented dwellings.

The present programme cannot start with questions of social policy. It must first try to prove that a future Labour government could in fact find the cash to carry out such projects. For this reason it has been necessary to assign pride of place to economic policies, because all other plans will stand or fall on the ability to succeed in this sphere.

LABOUR'S

Economic Policy

It is widely accepted that the British economy is in a very deep crisis. This is a fact of which the authors of the Labour Programme are well aware:

'... the British economy is so riven with deep structural faults that it is becoming increasingly difficult to manage it at all — especially to combine full employment and a reasonable rate of growth, with either a healthy balance of payments or acceptable levels of inflation.'

Faced with such an immense problem, modesty is clearly the order of the day. Time and again we read such phrases as: 'We do not claim that the measures we propose could solve easily the economic problems which have baffled governments of both parties for many years. We claim only that they will provide the necessary basis for removing the obstacles to sustained economic growth: they will not themselves remove these obstacles.'

It's the old case of trying to lead a horse to water, but having a nagging doubt that he won't be thirsty even if you get him there. Or, as our modest politicians put it:

'We do not claim that we will bring about a sudden acceleration in the rate of economic growth. We claim only that our policies, taken as a whole, should enable the next Labour government to allow the economy to expand in line with the growth of productive potential — thus maintaining a general level of full employment.'

INVESTMENT

The problem, however, is just this 'rate of growth of productive potential'. Putting the unemployed to work may provide an initial spurt of economic growth, but it cannot maintain the type of continuous expansion necessary to finance all of Labour's plans. That will require growing productivity of those at work. This, in turn, can be obtained in two ways: by sweating the existing work force more intensely, or through new capital investment. If we give Labour the benefit of the doubt, and assume they are not planning on introducing a form of Socialism based on slave-labour, then they must

CAPITALIST PRESS COMMENTS

When the new Programme appeared, its 70,000 words received relatively little editorial comment in the bourgeois press. A short editorial in the *Daily Telegraph* concentrated on conjuring up the traditional cold war fantasies for Tory shareholders. The document was 'Totalitarian in character and purpose', and would mean the 'end of economic freedom in Britain'. The *Daily Express* appealing to the fears of its shopkeeper audience, ridiculed the idea that statutory control of prices could go hand in hand with free collective bargaining (although Labour is in fact committed to an incomes policy). In the idiom of their readership, these catastrophic economic policies were described as an attempt by Wilson to 'bribe the voters'. Neither paper felt the need of a detailed analysis.

The *Times* took the affair more seriously. Its main concern was with the future of the two-party system and the quality of political statesmanship. The *Times* feels that Labour is using too much bad language these days. Talk about 'crude market forces' and 'glimpses under the

be counting on a big wave of new investment.

This is clearly their strategy. As they comment in regard to taxation policy: 'Labour will go back to a system which favours the retention of company profits for reinvestment in plant and machinery, and not their distribution into the pockets of shareholders.'

But this has its problems, as they also acknowledge elsewhere: 'In the financing of investment from ploughed-back profits, it is the consumer who pays for this investment through higher prices... The problem, of course, is that this investment provides the very sinews of the nation's industrial strength. And until we can devise some alternative source of finance for investment, we cannot afford to choke it off.'

FAR REACHING MEASURES

In order to tackle this crucial problem of economic growth a series of far reaching measures are proposed to lay the basis for economic planning.

These include a new Industry Act, which would give the government extensive powers to obtain information from companies, issue directives on major policy questions, and acquire partial or total ownership of particular businesses.

Also proposed is a Planning Agreement System, which would require the largest manufacturing companies to furnish regular information to government planning authorities, and to agree to tailor their policies to meet specific aims laid down by these authorities. In exchange these companies would be eligible to receive investment grants from the government, although major grants would involve state acquisition of a stake in the company.

Finally, various moves are proposed to extend public ownership, both by the nationalisation of certain industrial sectors which are heavily dependent on government financial aid (shipbuilding, docks, and aircraft), and by the establishment of a National Enterprise Board which will embark on a programme of buying up controlling interests in a number of the major manufacturing companies.

The whole aim of this new apparatus is to give the government sufficient power to decisively affect decision making by private capital. The National Enterprise Board, for example, is seen as being in a position to frighten its

stones of Lornho' does not create the climate for Labour Governments to establish good relations with industry. Of course, 'the Conservative Party in opposition tends to become more hostile towards the unions (yet) learns when in power that the country cannot be governed without the trade unions. The Labour Party in opposition naturally tends to become more critical of the management of private industry'. But this time Labour has committed an excess. As to its actual policies, *The Times* feels that there is nothing much worth commenting upon, except to say that nationalisation of a number of sectors will not provide any solution to the problem of the British capitalist economy as a whole.

Papers concerned with formulating strategy for the bourgeoisie can seldom afford rhetoric. So the *Financial Times* was extremely factual: 'the National Enterprise Board puts in an appearance of course, and some 25 of our largest manufacturers (names unspecified) are threatened with acquisition by it, but the only hard commitment is the old one, to nationalise the docks. Aircraft, shipbuilding, pharmaceuticals are mentioned too, but only as the object of future study.' The Industry Act might be a useful tool, but it differs little from Tory plans. 'There seems to be little to choose between the current Labour and Conservative approach to industry.' The *Economist*, significantly, has so far ignored the document altogether.

competitors into line through super efficiency and whirlwind strength.

Contradictions

The most striking feature of this set of policies is that they aim to carry out completely contradictory aims. We have the absurd idea that the vast sums required for Labour's social plans must be obtained through economic growth, which can only be developed through... vast sums of state expenditure!

Similarly, the National Enterprise Board is designed to stimulate investment through the companies it controls, but it is to be got off the ground through a big public loan issue — which will, of course, have the effect of drying up uncommitted capital available for investment, thus driving interest rates upwards. In fact, this National Enterprise Board is to be a most wonderful animal. It is to manage companies that can expand rapidly through profits, take a 'socially responsible' attitude towards their employees, set up shop in the less efficient 'development areas', and at the same time strike terror into the heart of every old fashioned capitalist business by threatening to undersell them in the market.

The balance of payments and exchange difficulties of the British economy are treated in the same way: 'Labour has never regarded devaluation or floating of the pound as a cure for all ills. Any drop in the international exchange rate of our currency inevitably causes the costs of vital imports of food, fuel and raw materials to rise... But we must be ready to act on the exchange rate in either direction when the occasion demands. In particular, our exports must not be allowed to become uncompetitive against those of our leading competitors...'

But the two aims of keeping the prices of imports and exports down require opposite movements in the exchange rate. Labour appears to be pledging itself to move the pound in both directions at once!

Labour's economic plans only make sense if we assume that they can work a miracle on the British economy that will outdo Christ's little exercise with the fishes and loaves. If we doubt the divine powers of Wilson and Co., then we must call into question the whole economic scheme of the Labour Programme, and with it all of the other fine pledges. The Labour Party simply cannot face up to the fact that the British capitalist system is in a crisis too deep to be solved by the type of mild reforms in which social-democracy specialises.

The economic problems we face are a result of the low rate of profit on investment in the British economy. This produces a situation in which businesses are very reluctant to embark on new investment programmes, and in which the actual volume of cash available for new investment is very low anyway.

This situation has a ruthless simplicity — the problems of the British economy can only be resolved, within a capitalist framework, by increasing the rate of profit. This requires a massive redistribution of the national income from the working class to the capitalist class. This may be carried out through the direct action of the bosses, who will increase the exploitation of the workforce by keeping wage increases lower than price and productivity increases combined. And it can be carried out with the help of the state: by such measures as investment incentives to business financed out of taxes on the working class.

Crisis of Labour

Labour's proposals simply do not face up to this fact. Only an improved climate of profit-making will encourage private business to

DREAM

invest. It is absurd to think that the government can order capitalists to invest if they don't want to. Nor will the threat of 'competition' from public companies be of much use; they will have to operate in the same conditions as private business, and, being burdened with extra responsibilities by government policy, will be even less competitive than private firms.

It remains the case that there is an absolute shortage of funds within the British capitalist system to finance new investment and growth. And all the fuss and bother in the world by a Labour Government will not be able to overcome this fact. It will serve no useful purpose to redistribute income within the capitalist class; it is a redistribution between classes that the capitalist system demands.

ATTACK ON WORKERS

A Labour Government elected on this programme would not be able to get very far with it. But what course would it then adopt? The answer can be gleaned from some very revealing passages in the section of the Programme concerning price controls:

'Our price controls will also be used to curb those profits which we consider to be excessive... The only acceptable role for profits at the present is that they provide a large part of the finance needed for investment; thus in real terms the role of profits is to ensure that the nation saves enough from its current output to provide the resources needed for capital investment... price increases may have to be allowed in order to provide for investment.'

In other words, when the contradictions in Labour's programme produce a conflict between protecting the interests of the working class and protecting profits, they will opt for the latter. Indeed, once it is accepted that profit is the way to 'provide the resources necessary for capital investment' there is no other alternative. Thus all the high-flown promises of new social benefits for the working class lead inexorably, through the logic of the capitalist system, to the necessity for launching big attacks on the working class.

'INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY'

The programme tries to wash down all these bitter pills with talk about 'industrial democracy'. It is argued that since the working class will have to pay the price for higher profits and reinvigorated capital accumulation, they should also be given some stake and influence in the companies involved.

Such schemes only serve to whitewash the realities of capitalist society; in themselves they do nothing to alter the fundamental operation of that capitalist economic system. One particularly clear-sighted bourgeois commentator, Peter Wisner, financial columnist of the *Sunday Times*, has understood this:

'You work for a company like Rolls Royce, say, and it gets into really big financial trouble... [some directors] are said to be 'representing the workers', which you naturally interpret as you and your colleagues. But where do their responsibilities really lie? Are they supposed to be protecting you and your job? Or preserving the company and with it the value of the [state capital sharing] fund's shareholding, which may mean massive redundancies, asset sales and so forth?'

All these moves would simply serve to bind the working class movement to the capitalist system and weaken the ability of the class to fight back against Government-led attempts to protect profits by stepping up the exploitation of the working class.

ILLUSIONS & AFTERWARDS

While there is nothing in the new Labour Programme that can represent the real interests of the working class, it would be a mistake to dismiss this programme as irrelevant. It does take up many of the major problems that are felt throughout the working class movement and offers solutions that appear superficially to be quite radical. It is certainly the most 'left' programme adopted by the Labour Party since the war.

We should have no illusions about the nature of the Programme, but we should also recognise that if it were actually used as the basis for Labour's electoral pronouncements it could succeed in mobilising the mass of the working class in the expectation that really anti-capitalist measures were being planned.

Our task is not to sit on the side-lines and mutter dire predictions, in the belief that the masses will spontaneously rally to our side when we are proved correct. Nor is it to sow illusions in the Labour Party and its leadership, in the expectation that this will make the shock of their inevitable 'betrayal' all the greater, and thus drive the masses more decisively to the left. The direction taken by the mass of the working class after a further Labour government 'exposes itself' will depend upon the ability of the masses to see a way forward independently of the Labour Party and trade union bureaucracies; it will depend upon

LEFT REACTION

Tribune, in the eye of the storm as it were, was the most cautious of the groups and publications on the left. Its editorial spent some time explaining to the Labour right how the proposal to nationalise the 25 would not alienate the Labour voter, and would not jeopardise Labour's chance at the next election. Of course, the constitutional arrangements within the Labour Party must remain fluid - in other words *Tribune* won't challenge the leadership's veto at Conference to the point of a split. The front page of *Tribune* even carried an article by Michael Foot, a Tribuneite who voted on the NEC against the proposal to specify the number as 25, who warns against making the row into a 'constitutional issue' within the Party.

The Communist Party accepted the basic framework of the Programme. There were it explained in the *Morning Star*, some 'worrying indications' that the Labour Party is 'hankering after a voluntary incomes policy'. The nationalisation proposals were a bit 'fuzzy'. But the main enemy was the right wing who would find many 'loopholes' in the document. The task now is to make the proposals more precise, and to exert pressure on Labour to carry out all the proposals. There is no explanation as to how this could be done. Nor was there any comment on what would happen if Labour nationalised something against the wishes of the ruling class, or an explanation of what precise forms a 'working class mobilisation' would have to take. A serious omission in the *Star's* coverage was any criticism of Labour's foreign policy (Ireland?), with the prominent exception of some metaphysics about how a cam-

their ability to develop organisations of their own to carry the class struggle forward.

REVOLUTIONARY TASKS

Our job must be to play an active part in the struggles of the mass of the working class, whether they are against the Tory government today, for the return of a Labour government tomorrow, or to wring concessions from the Labour Government the day after, in order to argue for and develop these independent activities and organisations. As the battle between the classes impels the struggle forward, we will, in this way, be able to wrest the leadership of the masses from the hands of the social-democratic traitors and muddlers.

It is necessary to put an end to a state of affairs in which material resources are only

paid against entry into the EEC being conducted by Communists was not the same as the one being conducted by Enoch Powell.

The CP believes of course in the possibility of achieving socialism through Parliament. *Workers Press*, organ of the Central Committee of the SLL, correctly criticised the CP for its parliamentary cretinism. But its own slogan is: 'Labour to Power on a Socialist Programme'. The explanation for this slogan is the SLL's theory that the working class must fight to commit the Labour Party to nationalising all the monopolies. How this is to be done remains unexplained. When Labour refuses to do this it will be 'exposed'. 'In this way the working class could be broken from the grip of reformist leadership' (11 June).

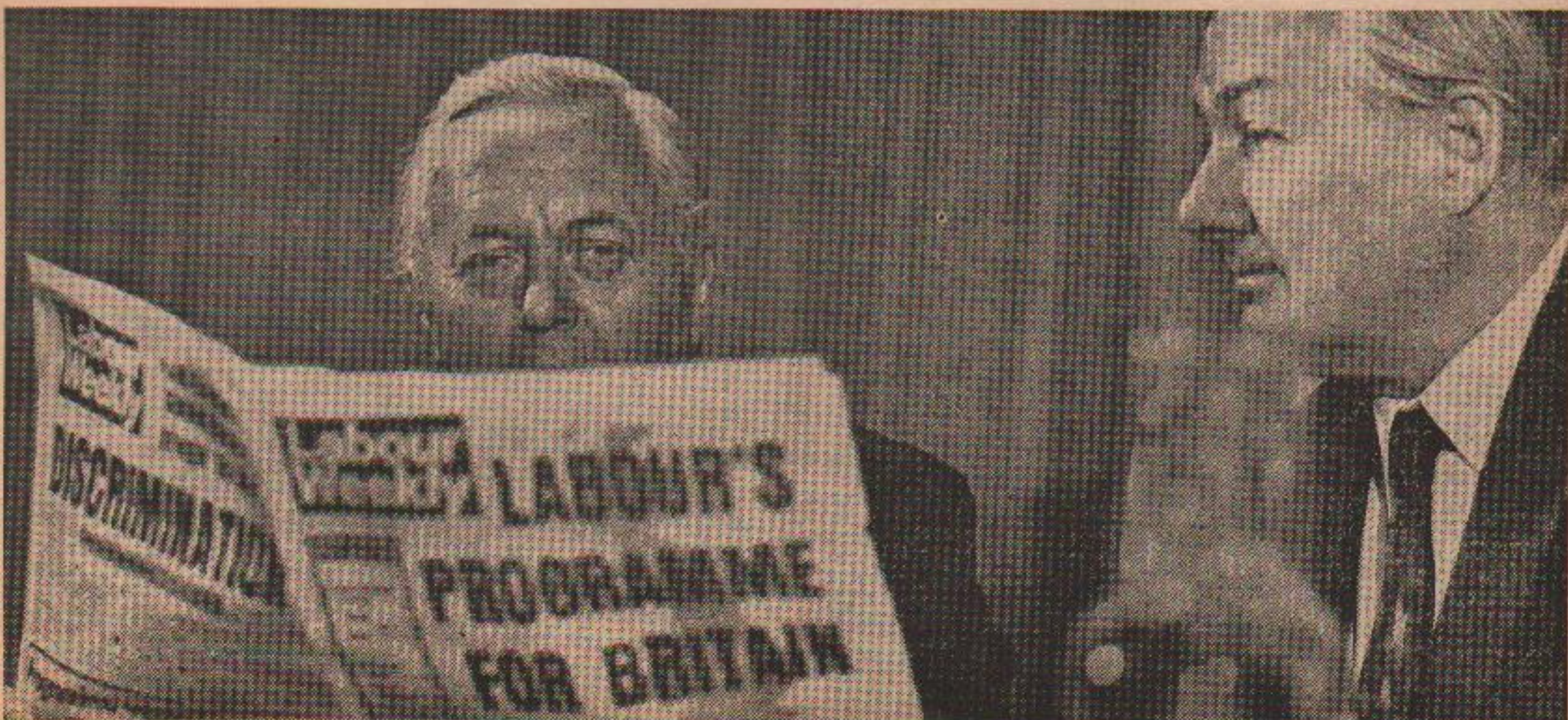
This ignores the fact that few worker militants believe today that the Labour Party will introduce a 'socialist programme'. On the grounds that the workers have learnt nothing from the last six Labour Governments, the SLL is conveniently absolved from putting forward slogans which would orientate the vanguard of the working class towards the creation of organs of working class power. We are not arguing here against placing demands on the Labour leaders but a 'socialist programme' involves, as the Comintern argued, at the very least the disarming of the bourgeoisie and the abolition of Parliament.

Finally, *Socialist Worker*, paper of the International Socialists, argues for the smashing of the capitalist state. But this is not made at all concrete, and it fails to link the question of smashing the state to what the workers are doing today. Thus it fails to mention such vitally necessary measures as workers control and the working out of a plan of production by the workers organisations. It is only by taking up such questions that any meaningful alternative perspective for working class power can be constructed.

turned to the needs of the people if capital can be seduced to set them into motion. But this can only be done if the workers seize the means of production, irrespective of property rights, and set them into motion on the basis of a plan worked out by the workers' organisations.

Instead of 'targets' worked out by 'teams of leading (bourgeois) economists', the workers themselves will make clear in the course of a new economic and political practice what their needs and demands actually are. If Parliament is an obstacle to legislation in the interests of the working class (and the civil service, with its links to capital, is an even bigger obstacle to its implementation) then Parliament should simply be abolished, and the workers' organisations should make all the necessary legislation.

Alf Jennings



THE JAPANESE CONNECTION

Right:
Japanese
student
demonstration

Japanese Imperialism Today, by Jon Halliday and Gavan McCormack (Penguin, 50p)/Tariq Ali

Given the fact that Japan today constitutes the second largest capitalist economy in the world, it is somewhat regrettable that this development has not been analysed in any detail by Marxists in both Europe and America.

It was Nixon's declaration of economic war against Japan in August 1972 which brought this deficiency home to the left with a vengeance. All of a sudden socialists are beginning to grasp the importance of the Japanese link in the imperialist chain.

Japanese Imperialism Today is the first serious attempt to come to grips with the problems raised by the new rise of Japanese imperialism. As such it represents an important gain for the revolutionary left as a whole. The two authors substantiate virtually every assertion with impeccable documentary evidence. We are provided with an invaluable account of how US imperialism exploited its post-war dominance to penetrate the Japanese economy, and the existing inter-relationships between Japanese and US capital are carefully studied and explained. US firms account for 65% of the foreign capital invested in Japan and in certain fields their control is total: IBM controls 70% of Japan's computer market via local subsidiaries and a similar situation exists in relation to the oil market. Nevertheless in a number of sectors US control has been declining as

ment, have essentially been used as a smoke-screen both in Japan and the United States by the respective ruling classes of the two countries.

Thus the official designation of the Japanese army even today is 'Self Defence Force.' From forces numbering 75,000 in 1950 this 'Self Defence Force' had grown to 230,000 in 1971 and by 1975 Japan (if it is still non-nuclear) will have the strongest non-nuclear striking force in the world. Ever since the Korean war a sector of Japanese industry has been devoted to armaments. The Vietnam war has acted as another boost. The result is that Japan is today 'self-sufficient' as far as war materials are concerned.

The growth of the armed forces and the production of armaments is clearly not designed for 'reasons of prestige.' In the coming period Japanese imperialism is going to play a more vigorous role in defending its investments in neighbouring countries. An open and public re-involvement by Japanese imperialism in aiding the counter-revolutionary strategy of world imperialism by the use of military force is therefore on the order of the day. The evidence produced by Halliday and McCormack in this regard is absolutely devastating.

Of course it would be incorrect to over-emphasise this development. There exists in Japan a strong anti-militarist and anti-imperialist tradition which has shown its strength on many an occasion since the Second World War. The destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has not been forgotten by the

Reviews

Japanese capitalism has, since the mid-60's, instituted a number of effective restrictions to prevent giant US corporations from owning more than 35% of capital in Japan.

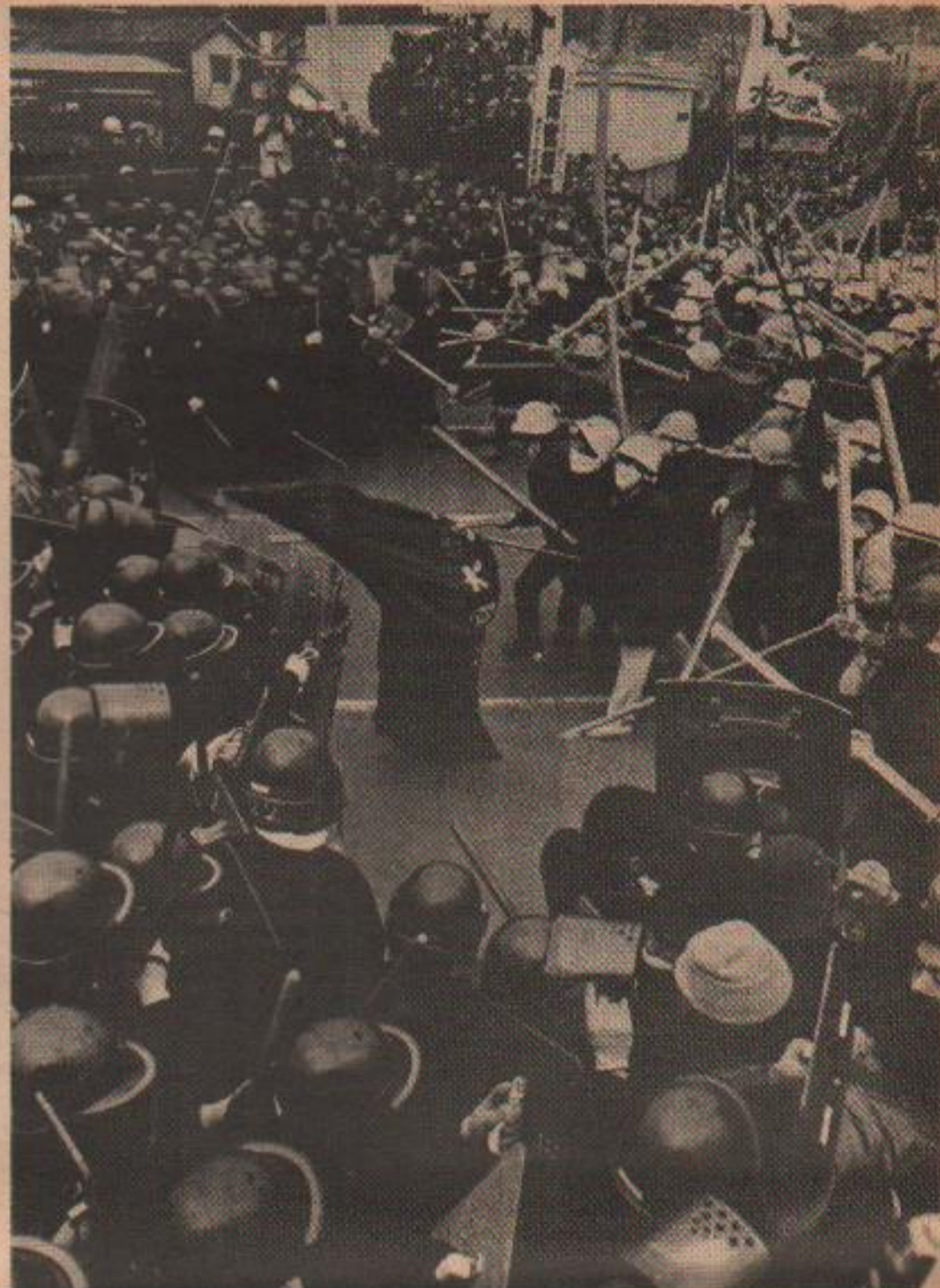
MILITARISM

It is in the context of the rapid development of Japanese capital and the emergence of Japan as a serious challenger to US investments in Asia that we have to appraise the parallel rise of Japanese militarism. Chapter 3 is, in this regard, the most useful chapter in the entire book. Halliday and McCormack describe in detail how US imperialism has kept the Japanese army in existence ever since the war ended (Japanese troops who had occupied Korea during the 30s were used again by the United States during the 1950-53 Korean war!). The 'pacifist' clauses in the Japanese Constitution, prepared by the State Depart-

ment, have essentially been used as a smoke-screen both in Japan and the United States by the respective ruling classes of the two countries.

WEAKNESSES

Unfortunately *Japanese Imperialism Today* only deals with the domestic class struggle in passing. There is no serious study of the developments inside the Japanese workers' movement coinciding with the resurgence of Japanese capital. Nor is there a chapter on the Japanese Communist Party, the Japanese Socialist Party or the revolutionary left which has developed over the last decade. This is a serious absence in the book, precisely because it could lead to an over-estimation of the objective strength of Japanese imperialism and its potential for military adventures.



A second defect is the confusion the book displays in relation to the Sino-Japanese rapprochement and Tanaka's visit to Peking. All this is naively taken (in accordance with the handouts distributed by Peking) as a 'victory for 'China's revolutionary diplomacy.' Even the most generous of critics would be forced to regard this as a somewhat myopic view of the Chinese turn. The latter has to be seen totally, both from the strategic interests of imperialism and the interests of the bureaucracy in power in Peking (surely the elimination of Lin Biao and the re-emergence of Teng Hsiao Ping should worry even ardent Maoists). Nixon's visit to Peking may or may not have 'stimulated unease in Tokyo.' It certainly stimulated more than mere unease in Hanoi! It also stimulated Nixon's election victory in 1972 and the latter stimulated the American ruling class to carry out the most destructive

raids in the history of imperialism over the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in December 1972. So Marxists approaching developments in a scientific way should be careful before adopting phrases such as 'revolutionary diplomacy.' It is clear that the Chinese leadership have opted for a course of peaceful co-existence in Asia, not dissimilar to the role the Soviet bureaucracy has played in Europe for many decades. Their actions should therefore be approached and appraised scientifically, and the same criteria must be used which have been applied to judge the actions of the Soviet Union.

However despite these two weaknesses *Japanese Imperialism Today* is a book which has opened an extremely valuable and long-needed discussion. It should be bought and studied by every revolutionary militant.

LENIN'S LAST STRUGGLE

Lenin's Last Struggle, by Moshe Lewin (Wildwood House paperback, £1.30)/Charlie van Gelderen

The publication of a paperback edition of Moshe Lewin's book will be welcomed by all who are interested in the history of Bolshevism — especially in that period when the Stalinist bureaucracy was fastening its grip on the Party and the Soviet state apparatus.

It should be of especial interest to those members of the Communist Party who have tried to grapple with the phenomenon of Stalinism ever since Krusthev's famous speech at the 20th Congress of the CPSU, but have been unable to get to grips with the problem chiefly because much of the history of the period has been deliberately obscured and falsified in the official publications.

Here, also, is the answer to those on the Left who believe that all would have been different if only Lenin had lived. These people usually subscribe to the belief that Stalin only triumphed because of Trotsky's 'weaknesses' and/or 'mistakes.' Boris Souvarine in his otherwise excellent biography of Stalin was one of the first to advance this point of view. It is clear, however, from the evidence which Moshe Lewin reproduces, that Lenin was already

defeated before he died; the bureaucracy was already entrenched in power.

True, Lenin's pre-eminence, his unparalleled authority within the Bolshevik Party and his strategic genius might have made it that much more difficult for the bureaucracy to usurp the power, but Krupskaya was undoubtedly right when she remarked, around 1926, that if Ilyich (Lenin) had been alive he would be either in prison or in exile. At that time it did not occur to her or to anyone else (probably not even to Stalin himself), that Stalin's course would eventually drive him to the murder of a whole generation of Bolsheviks and the emasculation of the Bolshevik Party.

Lenin, pre-occupied with the affairs of state and of the Communist International, did not realise the changes that were taking place within Soviet Russia as a result of the defeat of the revolution in the West and the exhaustion after the years of civil war and foreign intervention. True, he had not been unaware that the seeds of bureaucratic control over the Party and the state apparatus had already been planted. It was, however, only the enforced leisure caused by his illness which gave him the opportunity to gauge the extent of its growth. From that moment on, Lenin devoted what remained of his life to the struggle against the

bureaucracy in an attempt to put the Bolshevik Party back on the course from which it had been diverted by Stalin and his supporters.

What is significant is that the germs of counter-revolution were already manifesting themselves in Stalin's thinking in those early years when Lenin was still alive. Two of the corner-stones of the workers' state were the monopoly in foreign trade and the right of self-determination for the various nationalities which comprised what was to become the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. At the 6 October, 1922, session of the Politbureau, Stalin got agreement for his proposal to limit the state foreign trade monopoly. Three days later, Lenin sent for Trotsky and proposed that they jointly fight for a revision of this decision. Lenin also asked Trotsky to act on his behalf against the Great Russian chauvinism of Stalin and Ordzhonikidze on the Georgian question. Three times Lenin asked Trotsky to become his deputy. For reasons of his own, Trotsky refused.

INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

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In his concluding chapter 'If Lenin lived ...', Moshe Lewin joins forces with Souvarine and Isaac Deutscher in the belief that a Lenin restored to health and full vigour would have been able to defeat Stalin and halt the process of bureaucratisation, although he adds that he 'needed Trotsky to realise his ideas ... The two men complemented each other very well ... Between them they symbolised the motive force of the October Revolution.'

The 'ifs' of history are, of course, a subject of endless fascination, but Marxists must base themselves on objective as well as subjective factors. Despite his genius, Lenin — or Lenin and Trotsky — could not have brought about the October Revolution if the social conditions for revolution were not present. While speculation on this point is really idle, it is doubtful if the combination of Lenin/Trotsky could have halted the bureaucratic degeneration of the Party and the state.

History has taught us that without a Marxist Party which commands the support of the proletariat, a victorious socialist revolution is not possible. Similarly, after the conquest of power, the new workers' state needs the guidance and leadership of a Marxist party to steer it on the road to socialism. By 1922, from the evidence in this book, the Bolshevik Party had passed the point of no return. It was Bolshevik still in name but it had already turned its back on the international revolution — the only sure guarantee of the advance to socialism.

Tariq Ali tours Japan

Tariq Ali, a member of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International, recently concluded an extensive tour of Japan organised by the Japanese Revolutionary Communist League (JRCL - Japanese section of the Fourth International). Comrade Ali spoke at public meetings in ten major cities on the 'Class Struggle in Europe', 'Revolutionary perspectives in South Asia' and the 'Politics of the Fourth International'. The meeting in Tokyo drew 1200 militants, one of the largest meetings ever held by the JRCL.

The meeting revealed the important growth which the Japanese section has experienced in recent years, in particular the increasing number of young workers which it has attracted to its ranks. At a public meeting of 400 in the important industrial centre of Sendai (in northern Japan) for instance, well over 250 were young workers. This reflected the influence of the JRCL in the local railway workers' and postal workers' unions where it is the only revolutionary force inside the working class. In these public sector trade unions strikes are banned and every unofficial strike therefore tends to be posed as a confrontation against the government.

SANRIZUKA

The most important national struggle supported by the entire extreme left is the struggle against the construction of a new international airport at Sanrizuka, 25 miles outside Tokyo. The struggle of the local peasants, which began in 1967, still continues unabated and though the runways have been constructed in Area 1, the important Area 2 is still occupied by the peasants



under the leadership of the militant Peasants' League and the active participation of some of the revolutionary groups.

Amongst these the JRCL is in the forefront. It has won the confidence of the peasant leaders and its permanent defence guard of ten militants lives in Sanrizuka in its own hurriedly constructed headquarters, and works on the land together with the peasants. It is a sign of the prestige of the JRCL in this zone that several peasant leaders attended Tariq Ali's public meeting in Tokyo. Their leader who spoke at the meeting paid unstinted tributes to the JRCL and the Fourth International and explained how the struggle had radicalised the peasants living in Sanrizuka.

In return Tariq Ali promised that the sections of the Fourth International would 'internationalise the struggle against this so-called international airport', which the Japanese government is constructing essentially to facilitate the landing of U.S. military aircraft. The Sanrizuka struggle has gripped the imagination of large sections of the left and the fact that its construction has been delayed by over five years shows the wide base of support won by the peasants. It is in Area 2 that the next battles will take place (the Peasants' League and the JRCL have constructed a large tower in the 'liberated zone' which would effectively prevent any aircraft from landing) and both sides are preparing for the inevitable conflict. In this connection the JRCL is preparing an international appeal calling for co-ordinated actions throughout Europe and N. America when the new struggle erupts.



Argentina

While President Campora dines with Franco in Madrid, the Peronist regime is stepping up its campaign of repression against the revolutionary forces in Argentina. It was the old fox Peron himself, due to return to Buenos Aires next Wednesday, who launched the watchword 'Get the Trotskyists!'

The witch-hunt is directed primarily against the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP), led by the Argentinian section of the Fourth International - the only one of the armed groupings which is struggling to expose the Campora government and its pact with the military dictators. The Peronist Security Command has begun to carry out its threats of violence against the ERP: on the night of 7 June a Peronist group burned the ERP flag in front of the parliament building, and a few hours later a bomb exploded on the grave of Victor Fernandez Palmeiro, an ERP guerrilla who died earlier this year in the course of a reprisal for the Trelew massacre of August 1972.

The Peronist leadership is obviously determined to carry through its campaign of repression despite the release of military personnel being held by the ERP. It aims in this way to divide the revolutionaries from the masses, who hailed Campora's inauguration as a victory and now hope to see him grant all the demands which piled up under the military dictatorship. The repression against the ERP is the spearhead of the Peronists' efforts to decapitate this mass upsurge. The next few weeks will be decisive: international solidarity with the ERP is now an essential task for revolutionaries.

Denmark

The NATO Council Meeting in Copenhagen last week met with a strong response from the Danish left. Under the heading 'NATO Tool of Imperialism', a counter conference and demonstration were organised on 13-14 June.

Speakers at the conference exposed the role of NATO in the repressive regime in Greece, and in the Portuguese colonial wars in Africa. Sessions on the Cold War and Ireland highlighted the backing given by NATO to British imperialism. Bob Purdie, Organiser of the Anti-Imperialist League and a guest speaker at the conference, explained the way in which British imperialism had built up a repressive machine in the North of

Ireland which integrated all aspects of repression, military, legal and political. He warned the conference that the NATO armies, which had at first faced the forces of the Warsaw Pact, were now being turned also to face the growing army of revolution within their own state boundaries. The techniques being developed in the North of Ireland would be applied on a European scale; it was necessary to learn from the Irish struggle both the nature of these methods and how to fight them.

The demonstration on Thursday, 14 June, was preceded by a march from the German and British Embassies, organised by a united front of the revolutionary left. A speaker from the German KPD denounced the repression against that organisation by the German Government, and Bob Purdie spoke again, outside the British Embassy. The largest contingent on this demonstration came from the comrades of the Revolutionaries Socialists Forbund, the Danish section of the Fourth International, supported by the Revolutionaries Marxists Forbund, the Swedish section. The main demonstration, which marched to the NATO conference hall, was 8,000 strong. The counter conference and the demonstration made a big impact in Denmark, and some newspapers gave them equal coverage with the NATO Council itself.

Peru

The recent wave of repression in Peru has included among its victims Serge Barrios, accused of conspiring to violate state security. The 'crime' of Barrios and his comrades was to publish a left-wing paper.

A letter written by Barrios from Lurigancho Prison on 28 May gives some indications of what is happening in the Peruvian jails: 'I was arrested nearly 20 days ago... We were savagely tortured with methods reminiscent of the middle ages or the inquisition by the 'state security' agents of the military dictatorship. Together with us were arrested and tortured a number of workers, unionists, students, school teachers, etc. As it is usually done with common criminals, we were tortured until forced to sign 'confessions' suited to the repressive aims of the military.'

Tortures I underwent, after being kept standing and without sleep or food for 33 hours, consisted in being hanged from my arms, handcuffed in my back, and beaten while having my head covered with a black mask so I could not recognise my torturers. This went on for the night, the second night, my comrade escaping from the worst thanks to the fact that he fainted from the severe blows he suffered.'

While many trade union and political leaders have been exiled, Barrios and countless others are still being held in the torture chambers of the 'revolutionary' military regime of Velasco Alvarado. A picket will be held outside the Peruvian Embassy in Sloane Street to demand the release of all political prisoners, this Friday, 22 June, from 4.00 - 6.30 p.m. For more information contact: Peruvian Defence, c/o Red Weekly.

SPAIN: RISING STRUGGLES

The murder of a Barcelona building worker by Franco's police in March this year was the signal for the most recent of the nation-wide mobilisations of the working class which have shaken the Spanish dictatorship in recent years.

After three decades of fascism and military dictatorship, under a regime built on the bones of the Spanish Revolution, the working class is moving into new revolutionary struggles. Since the massive actions against the Burgos trials in 1970 which saved the lives of the Basque nationalists convicted by a military tribunal for political activities, the regime has been unable to quell solidarity actions by workers. Most prominent of these have been the SEAT car factory strike in Barcelona in October 1971, the shipyard workers strike in El Ferrol early last year (in which two workers were killed by police), and the local general strike in Vigo in September.

RECENT STRIKES

The recent strikes of March and April in response to the murder of Manuel Fernandez shared many of the same characteristics of these struggles: solidarity in the face of repression (spreading rapidly to other cities); advances in organisation and workers' democracy (strike committees, workers' commissions and student committees electing representatives to local councils in the Barcelona area); self-defence pickets on the demonstrations.

The CP meanwhile has tried to contain the upsurge of the past few years within the framework of the 'Pact for Liberty', a programme for alliance with the so-called 'progressive' sections of the bourgeoisie for the restoration of bourgeois democracy. The Stalinists have attempted to channel the activity of the working class into the formation of an 'opposition' within the State trade union apparatus. But struggles have constantly gone beyond this framework,

with rank-and-file militants attempting to revive the Workers' Commissions in the factories (generally led by the CP) as independent organs of the working class. It was through such struggles within the Workers' Commissions that the strikes at El Ferrol and Vigo developed.

NEW VANGUARD

To the fore of the new revolutionary vanguard which has grown up during these years are the Liga Comunista Revolucionaria (LCR, sympathising section of the Fourth International) and ETA VI. The LCR, founded two years ago, has played a major part in the campaign against the state unions; ETA VI is the revolutionary wing which has emerged from the nationalist movement of the Basque country - whose militants were the defenders at Burgos. ETA VI sees the road to national self-determination of the Basques in the struggle for the socialist revolution throughout Spain.

On 14 May this year, an important step was taken in the struggle to build the revolutionary party in Spain, when a joint declaration on the tasks of revolutionaries was issued by ETA VI and the LCR. The following is an extract from the conclusion of the resolution:

'The mobilisations against the murder of Manuel Fernandez have demonstrated the breadth of the new mass vanguard in the factories and the Workers' Commissions (CO). The main weaknesses are now the present nature of the CO and their lack of implantation in the factories, which makes them a barrier to the growth of the vanguard and to its further radicalisation. Its current growth, and increasing ability to initiate mass actions going beyond the class collaboration policy of the Spanish CP, are not matched by a conscious desire to struggle for a formula for proletarian power, as opposed to the project of class collaboration embodied in the CP's 'Pact for Liberty.' But such struggles as do take place, and the experience of self-organisation they

give rise to, together with the crisis in the CP, criticism of the 'Pact for Liberty' and the strengthening of various extreme-left currents, make it increasingly possible to overcome these weaknesses and bring a growing section of the new vanguard to join a serious revolutionary alternative.

In response to the repressive policy of the dictatorship and the economic plans of the bourgeoisie as a whole, the mass movement must be unified and organised, and a political vanguard developed to lead it towards the overthrow of the dictatorship.

Within the CO, and groupings of important sections of the workers' vanguard, the movement must be educated in the need to struggle for the most urgent united demands and for self-organisation of the class by means of assemblies and elected committees. In the face of Franco's crumbling 'legality', the movement must pay no respect to the capitalist policy of collective contracts and not

Barcelona: militants protect a demonstration with Molotov cocktails.



use 'trade union delegates' for negotiations with the bosses: only workers' assemblies will decide, only struggle pays!

The examples of Burgos, SEAT, El Ferrol, Vigo and above all San Adrian have shown that the forming of co-ordinating committees and of bodies representing all the sectors in struggle (CO, elected committees, faculty and other student committees, workers' parties, etc.) is necessary to unify and centralise mass action. The ground must be laid for a workers' united front to overthrow the dictatorship.

Down with the police state!

Workers' Commissions must lead the struggle to organise solidarity and self-defence of struggles!

Free Camacho and his comrades! End the repression against the Basque nationalists! Down with the bloody dictatorship!

Long live the international solidarity of the working class!

STEP FORWARD FOR FRENCH TROTSKYISTS

RED NOTES

Eight hundred militants — three hundred more than expected — turned up at a conference organised by the Ligue Communiste (French section of the Fourth International) for its industrial members and sympathisers in Rouen on 9/10/11 June.

The conference was not a rally but a serious attempt to tackle the key problems facing the European workers' movement. It is very easy to come up with general principles — the problem lies in the precise tactics needed to apply them. So the conference concentrated mainly on such questions as strike committees, support committees, grading workers' self-defence, workers' control and self-management. The discussions were given an international dimension through the participation of worker militants from the U.S., Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Spain, Britain, Luxembourg, Canada and Mexico.

The conference opened on Saturday afternoon with a report on 'The work of revolutionary militants in the factories.' This dealt with such questions as how to win an audience in the working class, what slogans to raise, what forms of organisation to propose, etc.

WORKERS' CONTROL

The session on Sunday morning was opened by a report on workers' control: the revolutionary strategy, the lessons of international experiences, and our intervention today. In the afternoon the question of self-management was discussed. It was stressed that in contrast to those who in practice devalue the idea, it is necessary to be very precise on the kind of socialism we want and the means of achieving it.

This discussion was followed by commission meetings, each devoted to a specific branch of industry (engineering, post office, railways, gas and electricity, printing, building, etc.)



Here the discussions were extremely concrete, dealing with the traditions of struggle in the industry, the level of trade union organisation, the slogans to be raised, and so on. At the same time three other commissions were also taking place: on women workers, on immigrant workers, and on the anti-militarist struggles and work in the army.

On Sunday evening it was the turn of the foreign delegations to report on the development of workers' struggles and the intervention of the sections of the Fourth International in their countries. Separate commissions were devoted to the struggle in Belgium, the U.S., Spain, Italy, and Britain.

Finally, on Monday morning, a report on 'The workers' struggles in Europe,' drawing together the lessons of all the commissions, was made by Charles Andre Udry, a member of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International and a leader of its Swiss section. Udry spoke despite an order banning him from entering France.

Fifty-five per cent of the workers attending the conference were members of the Ligue Communiste, the other 45 per cent being sympathisers

and members of 'Mole' factory groups. They came from 65 major towns and cities, and around 250 factories; 63 per cent were members of the CGT, the Communist Party dominated trade union federation, and 37 per cent of the CFDT union federation, which has links with the Socialist Party.

The numbers attending the conference, and the scope and seriousness of the discussions, were a decisive testimony to the growing influence of the Ligue in the French working

class movement. Only recently, at the CFDT conference, the union bureaucracy showed the increasing pressure it was under when all it could come forward with in the debate on strike committees was a series of anti-Trotskyist remarks. Once it was easy for the bureaucracy, the Stalinists and the social democrats to dismiss the revolutionary organisations as having no base in the working class. Rouen was only the latest demonstration of how far the relationship of forces has already been shifted in the struggles of the last few years.

BIRMINGHAM LABOUR DEFENDS MILITANTS

On Monday 25 June — the day before the trial of seven of the Shrewsbury defendants opens in Mold — five building workers and three ATV cameramen will appear before Birmingham magistrates. The eight are charged in connection with the occupation of a leading lump labour agency in February.

The Midlands Region of the building workers' union, UCATT, has played a leading part in organizing the defence in the area. This is being done through a special union defence committee, which convened a meeting on 20 June to involve broader sections of the labour movement. This initiative was supported by Birmingham Trades Council, which circulated the defence committee's 'Open Letter to the Labour Movement' to all Trades Council delegates. The Open Letter calls for full financial and industrial support for the defendants. A number of leading shop stewards' committees in the area also backed the 20 June meeting.

The Annual General Meeting of Birmingham area ASTMS, the Austin-Longbridge shop stewards' committee, and the local Rank and File teachers' group, have all pledged

their full support in this fight.

For the day of the court appearance, Midlands Region UCATT has called a mass demonstration outside the courthouse. The Trades Council is backing this action, along with the Birmingham Labour Party executive, who are circularizing their 131 ward organizations.

The attack on the Birmingham militants is part and parcel of a wider ruling class assault on the ability of the working class movement to carry on effective struggles. It is therefore essential that the Birmingham labour movement links up the highly creditable work it has carried out so far with the national campaign in defence of the Shrewsbury 24. United action of the whole labour movement with the Shrewsbury case as a central focus is the best way to smash the concerted drive of the state against our organizations.

The Birmingham example shows how the labour movement can unite its forces to defend militants under attack. This is an example we should put into practice all across the country to extend the campaign in support of the Shrewsbury 24.

On Tuesday the Court of Appeal turned down the appeal of four of the 'Stoke Newington 5' — Anna Mendelson, Hilary Creek, Jim Greenfield, and John Barker. Presiding over the court was Lord Chief Justice Widgery. He refused to accept that any of the procedures employed in last year's trial, when the four were convicted of conspiring to commit the 'Angry Brigade' bombings, were at all questionable. Sentence of ten years was upheld.

On Wednesday the conviction of Jake Prescott, found guilty of the same offence in an earlier trial, was also upheld. His sentence was however reduced from 15 to 10 years — but purely on the basis of 'parity' with the other four.

Students at Northumberland College of Education occupied the Administration Block on Wednesday, demanding the reinstatement of student Steve Dewitt, expelled by the college authorities 'on academic grounds'. The occupation came after a Union General Meeting on Monday night which voted for a 24-hour token occupation. The victimisation is obviously an attempt by the authorities to regain the initiative lost after the successful campaign at the end of last term for the reinstatement of lecturer Steve Whitley. Messages of support should be sent to: Students Union, Northumberland College of Education, Ponteland, Northumberland.

A demonstration to Brixton police station this Saturday is being organised by the Black Workers Movement. On Saturday, 9 June, the random arrest of a black youth after a stabbing incident sparked off a confrontation in which over 100 police, including the Special Patrol Group, waded into a crowd using truncheons and dogs. One of those arrested was a 14-year old bystander, whose parents were refused permission to see him while police were extracting a confession with the aid of boots and fists. He now faces a charge of grievous bodily harm.

This incident followed a series of at least nine racist bombings in South London of black shops and youth clubs. The police have done nothing to put a stop to these overtly racist attacks, claiming that they are the work of 'madmen'. Instead, they spend their time harassing the black community and black youth in particular, 30% of whom are among the area's unemployed. A majority of these are in open if apolitical rebellion against their situation, for which the ruling class has only one solution — repression.

On the initiative of the local Rank & File teacher group, Lambeth NUT has called for a conference on racism in the area. It is also supporting Saturday's demonstration, which assembles at Brockwell Park, Herne Hill, at 2.00 p.m. Further details from: Black Workers Movement, 38 Shakespeare Road, Brixton.

THE PLOUGH

(Paper of the Revolutionary Marxist Group
Irish supporters of the Fourth International)

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picketing a party given last Friday by the Irish Embassy's Press Officer for foreign journalists who are being taken to Ireland on a Free State public relations exercise. The picket met with considerable success, many guests coming out to talk to the picketers and expressing sympathy with their aims.

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WHAT'S ON

LEEDS IMG PUBLIC MEETING: Wednesday 27 June, Dominique Dubreuil on 'Lessons of France, May/June '68', Trades Club, 8.00 p.m.

THE REVOLUTION AGAINST PORTUGUESE COLONIALISM: Conference in Manchester this weekend, 23/24 June, starting 10.00 a.m. at Manchester University Students Union. Speakers include Marcelino dos Santos, Bob Sutcliffe, Fred Halliday, Basil Davidson.

CONFERENCE OF SOCIALIST ECONOMISTS will hold a work-in-progress meeting on the political economy of housing on Saturday, 10 November, in London, for socialist economists working in this field. Write to 43 Anson Road, London N7 0AR for information.

CRITIQUE is a new journal of Soviet studies and socialist theory. No. 1 contains articles on Workers' Control in Czechoslovakia, Towards a Political Economy of the USSR, Historiography of the Russian Revolution. Plus reviews, survey of current events, and original translations. Annual subscription 80p, single copies 40p, from: 31 Clevedon Road, Glasgow G12 0PH.

BRIGHTON IMG PUBLIC MEETING on 'Trade Unions and the Fight for Socialism'. Speaker: Bob Pennington, Wednesday, 27 June, 8.00 p.m. at the Prince George pub, Trafalgar St. (near St Peter's Church).

CENTRAL LONDON A.I.L.: Ken Tarback on 'Neo-colonialism'. Friday 22 June, at 8.00 p.m. in the General Picton pub, Calendon Road 15 minutes walk from Kings X tube.

FREE THE BELFAST 10: Regular picket every Saturday, 2.00 p.m. in Jobb Avenue outside Brixton prison. Organised by Belfast 10 Defence Committee, 88 Roslyn Road, London N.15.

FUND RAISING DISCOTHEQUE for End the Alliance Campaign, Friday 28 June, 8-12 p.m. at Fulham Town Hall. Admission 50p — tickets from Betty Northedge, 19 Ennismore Gardens, London SW7 1AA.

DEFEND THE WANDSWORTH 3: Saturday, 23 June, picket at 9.00 a.m. followed by demonstration 12-2 p.m. including prominent trade union speakers at Hamilton House, Mableton Place, off Euston Road. Organised by Wandsworth 3 Defence Committee. Also social with bar and disco some evening, 8-12 p.m. at New Merlin's Cave, Margery Street off Grey's Inn Road. Admission 50p — proceeds to Wandsworth 3 Defence Fund.